

RAINFORD URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL

REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the year

1942

S. C. GAWNE, M.D., B.S.Lond., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.C.H.,
D.P.H.,

Medical Officer of Health.

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RAINFORD URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL, 1942.

Chairman of the Council : Thos. Crooks, J.P.

Vice-Chairman of the Council : James Eden, M.B.E., J.P.

Chairman of the Health and Housing Committee :
F. Winstanley, Esq.

Vice-Chairman of the Health and Housing Committee :
R. C. Birchall, Esq.

Members :

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James Birchall, Esq.

R. Carlisle, Esq.

Sam Lewis, Esq.

John Molyneux, Esq.

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Frederick C. Rawlinson, Esq.

Walter Smith, Esq.

Ben Stockley, Esq.

Ed. Wainwright, Esq.

R. Webster, Esq.

Clerk to the Council : Geo. Walker.

Staff of the Public Health Department :

Medical Officer of Health :

S. C. Gawne, M.D. (State Medicine), B.S.Lond., M.R.C.S.,
L.R.C.P., D.C.H., D.P.H.

Sanitary Inspector :

Reginald C. Haycock, A.R.S.I., A.M.Inst.B.E., A.M.Inst.H.E.

COUNCIL OFFICES,
RAINFORD.

May, 1943.

To the Chairman and Members of the Rainford Urban District Council.

Sirs,

I have the honour to submit to you the 52nd Annual Report on the health of Rainford, being the Report for the year ended 31st December, 1942.

The Report has been drawn up on the lines indicated in Circular 2773 of the Ministry of Health dated 10th March, 1943. It is asked that only a short Report shall be presented on the lines of that for last year.

The Report is not intended to cover any of the work in connection with the A.R.P. Services.

It is once again a privilege to express to the Chairman and Members of the Health Committee my appreciation of the interest they have displayed in the work of this Department.

I would take this opportunity of thanking my fellow officials and members of the staff for their continued help and co-operation.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

S. C. GAWNE,

Medical Officer of Health.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (acres)	5,877
Estimated population, mid-year 1940	3,648
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1940) according to Rate Books	1,063
Rateable Value	£14,946
Product of a penny rate	£62 5 6

I.—PHYSICAL FEATURES AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE DISTRICT.

There has been no change in the boundaries of the district during the year. An account of the physical features and social conditions of the district will be found in earlier reports.

II.—VITAL STATISTICS.

For the duration of the war particulars of vital statistics will not be included in the Annual Report.

III.—GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

There have been no changes in the General Health Services during the year and particulars of the various services will be found in my Report for 1940.

The Child Welfare Centre continues to be well attended.

IV.—SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water.

Water is obtained from the St. Helens Corporation by agreement and the supply is satisfactory.

In order to improve the distribution of water within the district, an additional length of 840 yards 6 in. asbestos water main, with flexible joints, has been laid from Thickwood Moss Lane to the bottom of Cross Pit Lane in Church Road and connected back into the existing 4 in. main.

By this means it is anticipated that a good pressure will be maintained at the North End of the district and an increased volume of water made available for the Village.

All the houses in Rainford are supplied from the mains with the exception of seven supplied by wells and one from a spring. Five of the latter houses can be supplied from the mains, should the private supply prove to be unsatisfactory.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.

A full account of the sewerage systems in Rainford will be found in the Annual Report for 1937.

Some difficulty has been experienced in arranging for the disposal of sludge from the Rookery works and an improvement has been effected to the existing sludge beds by forming a new system of channelling. Better access to the beds has been obtained by the construction of a cartway. A number of temporary sludge beds have also been made.

Closet Accommodation.

The War has prevented progress being made with the conversion of privy middens.

The elimination of privy middens remains a chief sanitary requirement in the district.

Public Cleansing.

No alteration in the system of public cleansing has taken place during the year. Full details were given in the reports for previous years.

Shops.

The Shops Act, 1934, is enforced by the County Council. The provisions of the Act, however, relating to the ventilation and temperature of shops and to sanitary conveniences are administered by the Urban District Council. It has not been necessary to take any action during the year.

Eradication of Bed Bugs.

For several years there has been no evidence of the infestation of houses with bed bugs within the district.

V.—SCHOOLS.

The school children in the Rainford Urban District are inspected by the School Medical Department of the Lancashire County Council. The fact that the Assistant County Medical Officer of Health responsible for this work is also Medical Officer of Health for the District, is effective from the point of view of public health administration. Not only is a full knowledge of the people and the needs of the district of great help at the examination of the children, but prompt action can be taken in the event of an outbreak of infectious disease.

Close co-operation exists between the Medical Officer and the teachers, and much use is made of the returns of sick children forwarded by the School Attendance Officer each week.

Exclusion of scholars is carried out in accordance with the Board of Education's memorandum. A new memorandum was issued by the Board during the year containing recommendations based upon recent knowledge of the spread of infectious disease. Copies have been sent to medical practitioners. It is hoped that the adoption of these recommendations will secure a uniformity of procedure in the case of exclusion of scholars from school.

School Closure.

It was not found necessary to close any of the schools during the year.

Health Services for Schools.

A School Clinic has been provided by the County Council at the Council Offices. Children may attend here for inspection and treatment of minor ailments, eye and ear defects, and dental caries.

The Clinic is open for these purposes as follows :—

Tuesday 2 p.m.—4 p.m. Dental Surgeon attends (Mr. Linnell).

Friday 10 a.m.—12 noon. Minor Ailments (Nurse Melin).

Sessions are also held for the immunisation of children against diphtheria.

School Feeding.

The milk in schools scheme of the Milk Marketing Board continues in operation.

Samples of milk delivered to each school are taken quarterly for pathological examination for tuberculosis at the request of the County Council. The samples in 1942 all proved satisfactory.

Cleanliness.

Reference was made in last year's report to the incidence of verminous infestation in school children. Cleanliness inspections still constitute an important part of the work of the School Nurse and vigorous action is taken where infestation is found.

There has been some increase in the incidence of skin disease since the outbreak of war. Scabies has raised particular problems of an administrative nature.

Scabies is a contagious affection. Close contact is needed before infection is acquired, but one case in a family frequently leads to the remaining members of that family falling victims. Treatment consists in thorough bathing in hot water, followed by the application of a sarcopticidal ointment or lotion to the skin.

Home circumstances in many cases do not lend themselves to the effective carrying out of treatment for scabies.

Arrangements were made with the County Council for school children suffering from scabies to be admitted to the Sick Bay at Minster Lodge, Ormskirk, and during the year 19 Rainford children received treatment there. In addition 14 children were treated at the School Clinic.

The treatment of adult sufferers raised peculiar difficulties. Such patients could ill afford the time for in-patient treatment in hospital. Arrangements were therefore made with the Ormskirk U.D. for adults to attend at the I.D. Hospital for out-patient treatment. In this way patients secured rapid treatment and were able to return home the same day. Five adults were treated during the year.

The need for disinfestation of bedding, blankets and clothing of scabies patients has lately been questioned by some Authorities. In Rainford such disinfestation is regarded as desirable and has been carried out in all cases. An Army disinfestation machine set up at Muncaster Hall for Civil Defence purposes is available for the treatment of clothing and bedding and has proved very useful.

VI.—HOUSING.

No changes have taken place with regard to housing since my last Report.

Since the outbreak of hostilities, it has not been possible to carry out the normal routine inspection of houses in the District. The staff available in normal times was limited, and extra duties, such as A.R.P., have now prohibited such inspections.

VII.—INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk Supply.

On the 31st December, 1942, there were registered under the Milk and Dairies (Amendment) Act, 1922, and the Milk and Dairies Order, 1926 :—

5 persons as cowkeepers and wholesale purveyors of milk ;

13 persons as cowkeepers and retail purveyors of milk ;

2 persons as purveyors of milk.

There are in the district approximately 70 cows kept for dairy purposes.

Routine inspections have been carried out during the year by the Sanitary Inspector. Every effort is made to maintain a satisfactory standard of cleanliness in the case of both cows and cowsheds. It will be appreciated that no structural alterations have been effected since the outbreak of war.

Meat and Other Foods.

Slaughter Houses and Meat Inspection : There were no slaughter houses in operation in the District during the year.

VIII.—FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT, 1901, AND FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

No change has occurred in the number of factories and workshops within the district since last year.

IX.—PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

No serious outbreak of disease was experienced during the year.

62 cases of infectious disease were notified to the Department under the Infectious Diseases Notification Act.

Apart from notifications received under this Act, information of sickness in school is obtained from the returns forwarded by the School Attendance Officer to the Medical Officer of Health each week, and the head teachers of the schools inform the School Nurse at her routine visits to school of those children who are absent from school, and suspected of infectious or contagious disease. In this way, valuable knowledge of the incidence of infectious disease is acquired, so that it is possible to take prompt measures to combat the spread of such sickness.

Scarlet Fever.

8 cases of scarlet fever were notified during the year.

Diphtheria.

7 cases of diphtheria were notified during 1942. In no instance had the patient received a course of immunisation against the disease. Two of the cases were adults. There were two deaths, both children.

For several years diphtheria in Rainford has been of a severe type. It is important that all parents should realise the need for having their children protected against the disease by immunisation.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS) DURING THE YEAR 1942.

Disease	Total cases at all ages	Under 1 year	1	2	3	4	5 to 9	10 to 14	15 to 19	20 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 64	65 & Over
Smallpox	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever	8	—	—	—	—	—	6	—	2	—	—	—	—
Diphtheria	7	—	—	1	—	1	2	1	—	1	—	1	—
Enteric Fever	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Puerperal Fever	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pneumonia	5	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	1	1	1	—	—
Erysipelas	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Measles	29	2	—	5	3	4	15	—	—	—	—	—	—
Whooping Cough	12	1	1	1	1	1	7	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals	62	3	2	8	4	6	30	1	3	2	2	1	—

There were 5 deaths, three from pneumonia and two from diphtheria.

Immunisation against Diphtheria.

A most encouraging response has been obtained to the Council's scheme for the free immunisation of children in the Urban District against diphtheria, which was put into operation in November, 1938.

It is estimated that at present 80.6% of children of school age and 81.7% of children under school age are immunised against the disease.

The tables given below show the number of children who have been immunised since the Scheme was instituted. The campaign is being continued and every effort made to secure the treatment of the pre-school child.

	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	Total
Under 1 year			2	3	1	under 5 years at end of 1942
1 year ...	2	14	9	36	41	
2 years ...	5	11	11	22	17	
3 years ...	10	5	4	9	9	
4 years ...	12	7	11	15	13	188
5 years ...	21	13	4	11	8	Between 5 & 9
6 years ...	31	13	4	11	11	
7 years ...	24	9	5	5	5	
8 years ...	25	5	5	2	1	
9 years ...	28	11	2	5	1	197
10 years ...	35	6	5	6	—	Between 10 & 14
11 years ...	27	4	2	6	—	
12 years ...	29	3	2	2	—	
13 years ...	21	3	2	1	—	
14 years ...	1	—	—	—	—	214
15 years and over ...	1	—	—	—	—	Total over 15 yrs. at end of 1942— 87
	272	105	68	134	107	
						686

Alum precipitated toxoid supplied by the Ministry of Health is the standard immunising agent used. Two doses are given sub-cutaneously into the upper arm, an interval of at least four weeks intervening between the two. The first injection amounts to 0.2 c.c. and the second to 0.5 c.c.

It is most unusual for any reactions to occur in children under 8 years of age. Over this age slight local reactions have occasionally been noticed after the first "detector" dose of 0.2 c.c., and in these cases immunisation treatment is completed with Toxoid Antitoxin Floccules. It is exceptional for any reaction to occur after T.A.F.

Immunity is acquired some 2 or 3 months after the last injection.

Anterior Schick testing has not been undertaken and indeed is generally regarded as unnecessary. Posterior Schick Testing has also been omitted for the same reason.

Children of pre-school age are treated at the Child Welfare Centre. School children receive treatment in school or at the School Clinic.

Immunising material is supplied free of cost to practitioners in the district upon request.

Tuberculosis.

There were no deaths among non-notified cases of Tuberculosis during the year.

The County Council are responsible for the provision of dispensaries, sanatoria and home visiting for Tuberculosis.

The Tuberculosis Dispensary for residents in the Rainford District is in Hardshaw Street, St. Helens. Patients may be referred there with a note from their own doctor or by the School Medical Officer and Medical Officer in charge of the Maternity and Child Welfare Centre.

Notification of Tuberculosis is complete and satisfactory.
